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# New company to open beryllium mine

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DELTA — A newly formed company is planning to begin operating a beryllium mine and refinery in the West Desert of Utah by sometime late next year.

Since 1969, Brush-Wellman, Inc. has operated the world's only beryllium mill and mine. The company's mill 18 miles north of Delta processes ore from the Brush mine west of Topaz Mountain in Juab County.

The new company will mine ore on land adjacent to the Brush-Wellman mine and refine it also near Delta.

The new company has not yet been named. It is a joint venture, half of which is Beryllium International Corp., owned by Richard Moody of Delta. The other half is a holding company called Inspiration Gold, which is a subsidiary of Inspiration Resources, Inc.

Inspiration Gold owns 51 percent of the joint venture and half of Western Gold Exploration Mining Co. West Gold will manage Inspiration's share of the venture, according to Project Manager Bob Prescott. "In essence, we're going to develop this operation and run it," he said.

West Gold has several mines around the country, Prescott said, and an office and technical staff in Denver.

Inspiration Resources is a New York-based company listed on the New York Stock Exchange.

Moody owns the property on which the mine will be located. He sold 51 percent interest in the project to Caminco American Resources, the U.S. division of Caminco Ltd., a Canadian mining company.

Caminco did a project feasibility study and decided not to pursue it. They sold their interest to Inspiration Gold.

"We have done enough test work that we think we can produce some kind of salable beryllium product," Prescott said. "Now we have to get down and design a physical plant."

No "official" announcement of the project has been made. "They just barely bought the property a month ago," Moody said. But the operation is not a secret. It was discussed at a recent Delta Area Chamber of Commerce meeting attended by Gov. Norman Bangert.

The company's mine is adjacent to the Brush-Wellman mine. "They strip (mine) right up to our property line," Moody said. "It's a continuation of the same ore body."

The mill will be built on 320 acres of private land on the Brush-Wellman Road about a mile and a half west of the Intermountain Power Plant. The company has an option to buy the land.

A temporary office has been

opened in Delta to handle the project's early stages. It will be moved to the plant when it is finished.

Prescott said there are about 13 federal and state permits that must be acquired before operations can begin. "Just like they did with IPP," Moody said. Impacts on land, air and water quality and use are among those that must be analyzed. Some of the permits require public hearings.

The project will employ "about 50 people," Prescott said. "I think the feasibility study had it at 76 or something like that," Moody said. "We haven't decided on production levels yet," Prescott said, which will influence the number of jobs needed.

Most of the jobs will be local hires. "Probably only about a half a dozen," would come from out of the area, Prescott said.

Prescott was unable to discuss the potential tax base the company would create. "By the time the property is developed," he said,

"it's going to be several millions of dollars."

Hiring will not take place for "a while yet," Prescott said. "Right now, we have to get an office established and get a core of technical people on board so that we can begin the engineering, permitting and environmental studies. That's what we're doing right now."

Hiring, when it takes place, will be done through Job Service, Prescott said. "My guess is that construction would begin around the first of the year," he said. "That'll take several months. It's going to be quite a while before we hire anybody full time."

Beryllium has unique properties used in computers, telephones and other high-tech applications. Its most notable use is in the tiles that cover the Space Shuttle. Those beryllium tiles keep the spaceship from burning up on re-entry into the Earth's atmosphere.

Prescott and Moody would not comment on marketing.